



COOK COUNTY HEALTH

Subject: Employee Health Services		Category: CCH SYSTEM WIDE
Title: Mandatory COVID-19 Vaccination for Personnel		Page 1 of 4 Policy #: EHS.011.01 Approval Date: 08/12/21 Posting Date: 08/16/21

PURPOSE

Consistent with its duty to provide and maintain workplace that is free of recognized hazards, and a healthcare environment that protects patients from harm, Cook County Health (CCH or Health System) has enacted various policies which require that employees obtain vaccines from infectious disease, such as EHS.004.001 - Infectious Disease Surveillance Guidelines, which provides for mandatory vaccines for Influenza, Rubella, and Rubeola. These mandatory vaccination programs have proven effective as a means of ensuring that patients, visitors, and employees are protected against these diseases.

CCH has determined that SARS-CoV-2, the virus which causes COVID-19, presents a significant risk of substantial harm to the health and safety of its employees and patients. Unvaccinated employees and workforce members exacerbate this risk and create an unacceptable level of potential harm. As a result, CCH has determined that it needs to expand its mandatory vaccination program to include COVID-19.

AFFECTED AREAS

This policy applies to all of Cook County Health workforce members. CCH includes Central Campus (John H. Stroger, Jr. Hospital of Cook County, Professional Building, Harrison Square and Administration Building), Provident Hospital of Cook County, Correctional Health Services, Cook County Department of Public Health (CCDPH), Ambulatory & Community Health Network (ACHN), CountyCare, and Health Plan Operations.

POLICY

A. CCH - Personnel COVID-19 Immunization Requirements

With the exception of Exempted Personnel, as defined in this policy, all CCH Personnel shall be required to be immunized against SARS-CoV-2. Vaccination(s) administration will be consistent with guidelines from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of Centers for Disease Control (CDC). This vaccine requirement is a condition of employment.

B. Initial Vaccination - Existing Personnel

The Health System will provide or arrange for COVID-19 vaccination(s) during work hours, at no cost to Personnel. Personnel may choose, on their own time, to receive COVID-19 vaccination(s) from a source other than that arranged for by the Health System at their own cost and/or under their health coverage, in which case they shall provide verifiable documentation of vaccination(s) to Employee Health Services. All Personnel must provide proof of receipt of at least one (1) dose of COVID-19 vaccination, or obtain a deferral or exemption, not later than September 1, 2021. If the variety of vaccine received requires more than one (1) dose, proof of the second dose shall be provided to Employee Health Services not later than September 30, 2021.

C. Subsequent Vaccinations

Should CCH determine, based upon guidance issued by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of Centers for Disease Control (CDC) or other governmental agency, that additional vaccinations, boosters, or treatments are required, the deadline for obtaining such vaccinations, boosters, or treatments shall be communicated to Personnel at least thirty (30) days prior to the deadline. Failure to obtain required additional vaccinations, boosters, or treatments shall be considered a violation

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of this policy and subject's employees to discipline action under Section G, up to and including termination.

D. CCH - New Personnel

New Personnel are required to comply with the vaccine requirements of this policy. Newly Hired Personnel must have received at least one (1) dose of COVID-19 vaccine, or obtain a deferral or exemption, prior to their first day of employment. Proof of any required second dose must be provided not later than thirty (30) days after the first day of employment.

E. Exemption from Vaccination Requirements

Upon written application made to Employee Health Services, Personnel may be granted either an exemption or deferral of the vaccination requirements in this policy, based upon a disability, medical condition, or sincerely held religious belief, practice, or observance. Applications for exemptions and deferrals will be treated as a request for reasonable accommodation under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. Section 2000e *et.seq.*), the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Section 12101), the Illinois Human Rights Act 775 ILCS 5/1 *et.seq.*), or the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance. As a result, requests may be granted for any reason authorized in those laws, but exemption or deferral based solely upon a general philosophical or moral reluctance will not be considered.

Each request for exemption or deferral shall be considered individually. When considering the request, CCH will consider: 1) the duration of the request (either permanent in the case of exemptions or temporary in the case of deferrals), 2) the nature and severity of the potential harm posed by the request, 3) the likelihood of harm, and 4) the imminence of the potential harm. In evaluating these factors, Employee Health Services will work in conjunction with Human Resources to evaluate the work environment, available ventilation, frequency, and duration of direct contact with employees and patients, the number of fully vaccinated Personnel in the work location, potential alternative shift/work assignments, and the availability of social distancing. These determinations will be made based upon reasonable medical judgment, utilizing the most recent medical knowledge, such as CDC guidance.

Where CCH concludes that, in the case of a particular request for exemption or deferral, the preventive Infection Control Measures outlined below are not adequate to ensure the safety of Personnel and patients, prior to denying the request, CCH will engage the employee in an interactive process to determine whether other, additional, accommodations are available that would not cause an undue hardship and would adequately mitigate the risk to Personnel and patients.

F. Preventive Infection Control Measures

Non-vaccinated Exempted Personnel are required to comply with preventive infection control measures established by the Health System to reduce the risk of transmitting SARS-CoV-2 to patients, visitors, family members or other Personnel. These conditions will vary based upon the particular circumstances, such as job location, job duties, and shift, but will minimally include weekly COVID-19 testing and enhanced PPE protocols.

G. Failure to Obtain Vaccine

Compliance with this policy is a condition of employment with CCH. Unvaccinated Personnel without a valid exemption or deferral present a direct threat of harm to the health and safety of CCH patients, employees, and visitors, and are therefore, unfit to perform their duties and must be removed from all

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CCH locations and property.

Failure of employees to obtain the required vaccine, an exemption, or deferral by the deadline established by this policy, or any extensions granted by Employee Health Service, or failure to comply with additional preventive infection control measures, shall constitute gross insubordination and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

The failure of any CCH employee charged with enforcement of this policy who fails to take required action to enforce this policy shall constitute gross insubordination, and will result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

DEFINITIONS

1. **"Personnel"** means all persons who are employed or engaged in the provision of services, research or educational activity on behalf of CCH, whether paid or unpaid, including, but not limited to, employees, members of the medical staff, contractors and contractors' staff, residents, students, trainees and volunteers.
2. **"Exempted Personnel"** means Personnel who have obtained an Exemption or Deferral from the vaccine requirements created in this policy.
3. **"Exemption"** means a full waiver of COVID-19 vaccination requirements as a reasonable accommodation for a disability, sincerely held religious belief, practice or observance, or other covered circumstance under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. Section 2000e *et seq.*), the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Section 12101), the Illinois Human Rights Act 775 ILCS 5/1 *et seq.*, or the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance.
4. **"Deferral"** means an extension of the deadline to receive COVID-19 vaccination as a reasonable accommodation for a disability or other covered circumstance under Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. Section 2000e *et seq.*), the Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Section 12101), the Illinois Human Rights Act 775 ILCS 5/1 *et seq.*, or the Cook County Human Rights Ordinance.

PROCEDURE/PROCESS

COVID-19 vaccination(s) of Personnel shall be documented by Employee Health Services.

Personnel who choose to receive COVID-19 vaccination(s) from a source other than that arranged for by the Health System shall provide verifiable documentation of the date of vaccination, place of vaccination, and contact information for verification to Employee Health Services.

CROSS REFERENCES

CCH Policy - Infectious Disease Surveillance Guideline, EHS.004.001
Cook County Human Rights Ordinance

RELEVANT REGULATORY OR OTHER REFERENCES

Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) of Centers for Disease Control (CDC)
Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. Section 2000e *et seq.*)
The Americans with Disabilities Act (42 U.S.C. Section 12101)
The Illinois Human Rights Act 775 ILCS 5/1 *et seq.*

EXHIBIT A

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ATTACHMENT(S)/APPENDIX(IES)

None

POLICY UPDATE SCHEDULE

This policy will be reviewed at least every three (3) years or more often as appropriate.

POLICY LEAD

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POLICY HISTORY

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